



# TEXAS HOLD'EM Tournament Rules

*These No-limit Texas Hold'em poker tournament rules are to be used in conjunction with 'Robert's Rules of Poker'. Where there is a discrepancy between these rules and Robert's Rules of Poker, these rules shall take precedence.*

## WINNING THE TOURNAMENT

The final player remaining with all the chips will be the first prize winner. The last player eliminated will be the second prize winner; the second last player eliminated will be the third prize winner, etc. If more than one player is eliminated on the same hand, they shall split the prize values for the appropriate places. Players may 'cut side deals' to split prizes but the Tournament Director is never responsible for the execution of these deals.

## LATE PLAYERS

Players who have committed their attendance to the Tournament Director but have not arrived by the deal of the first hand will, at the Tournament Director's discretion, be assigned a seat and issued chips. The dealer will ensure all appropriate blinds are posted on behalf of the absent player until they arrive. Any player position that is being "blinded out" must be dealt cards. A player that does not arrive prior to the end of the round can not move forward to the next round.

## TIMER USE AND BREAKS

The blinds timer and schedule will be displayed throughout the room. The clock will automatically restart and the next level of blinds will be displayed. The next hand will be dealt at the new blind level. For the purpose of this rule, a hand is considered currently in play once the all blinds/antes are posted AND the dealer has begun shuffling (riffles the deck). Predetermined breaks will be established and displayed on the screen (usually after one hour). Additional breaks will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director. The timer is stopped during breaks and during any disputes that occur which require attention from the tournament director to resolve. No additional hands at any table should be started during such a break although hands already in progress should be completed.

## BLINDS SCHEDULE

The blinds schedule shall be posted in plain view of the playing table(s). The blinds schedule is included with these rules. This schedule may be adjusted at the discretion of the tournament director.

## SEATING

Players will be distributed as evenly as possible between all tables. Players will be seated by random draw by the Tournament Director.

## THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR (TD)

The TD is responsible for all table, seating and dealer decisions. The TD is responsible for the handling of the timer although may delegate this task to any dealer/player at his discretion. In the case of disputes and rules interpretations, the TD will have final authority. TD reserves the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness, even if a strict interpretation of the rules may indicate a different ruling.

## CHIPS

- Installations will post the values and the starting amount of chips. There are five different color chips.

## SEATING

- Each player will be seated according to a random drawing and this will remain their seat until they are eliminated or advance to another table/round.



- The dealer is responsible for informing the tournament director of the player's names that have moved forward, and what their respective chip counts are.
- A single player may be moved to another table to keep the tables somewhat balanced. This will be done between level increases. The player from the table with more players will be taken from behind the button and moved to a seat behind the button at a new table. The finalists will begin play with the next level of limits and blinds above the last level in play prior to combining the tables

## THE GAME

### Preflop

Starting with the dealer button, each person is dealt one card. Then a second card. Both cards are face down. After everyone receives their pocket/hole cards (the two cards face down just dealt), then betting occurs. (See rules for blinds)

Note: the dealer button is actually a button that says "dealer" on it that is passed around the table after each hand. It signifies where the dealing is started from.

### The Flop

- After the first round of betting is completed the dealer will burn the top card and place the next three "Community" cards face up in the center of the table
- The second round of bets starts with the first active player to the left of the dealer button
- Players now can now either check, raise, or fold (see rules for betting included):

### The Turn

- The dealer will now burn the top card and turn over one more "Community" card
- The betting will again start with the first active player to the left of the dealer button
- Players have the same options as the previous round with bets & raises

### The River

- The dealer now burns and turns the final "Community" card
- The betting will follow the same process as the previous round
- If a player makes a bet that all remaining players fail to call the hand is over with that player taking the pot and without having to show his cards

### The Showdown

- After the all bets are called each player still in the hand will have bet the same amount and the dealer will declare that the pot is right
- All players must turn over their cards (visible to all players) and call their own hand
- The best five card hand wins the pot unless someone has gone "All-In" as described below

### The Bets

- Each hand starts with two "Blind" bets being posted, ensuring every hand is worth something
- The player to the left of the dealer button posts the small blind which is half of the lower limit
- The player to the left of the small blind posts the big blind which is the full lower limit
- The blinds shall remain in front of the players until the conclusion of the "pre-flop" betting. The dealer will rake the blinds and all other bets into the pot
- The number of raises in any betting round is unlimited.
- All bets must be at least equal to the minimum bring-in, unless the player is going all-in.
- All raises must be equal to or greater than the size of the previous bet or raise on that betting round, except for an all-in wager. A player who has already checked or called can not subsequently raise an all-in bet that is less than the full size of the last bet or raise.
- If a player tries to bet or raise less than the legal minimum and has more chips, the wager must be increased to the proper size. (This does not apply to a player who has unintentionally put too much in to call.) The wager is brought up to the sufficient amount only, no greater
- All bets shall be stacked and pushed directly in front of player. The dealer will verify all bets and rake them to the center pot at the conclusion of each round of betting. Tossing chips into the pot is not allowed
- Players are required to verbally declare their bet (Call, Check, Raise w/ amount, or Fold)
- The dealer will make all change for larger chips out of the pot. Players betting large chips shall declare their bet when placing out the chips and the dealer will make the change as needed
- Players may not disclose or turn over their "holecards" during a live hand even if folded. This injures the rights of players who are still competing.



## All-In

- If a player cannot cover a blind, he **must** use all remaining chips and post a short blind and declare "All-in". Both blinds and each called bet (not including raises) from the "pre-flop" round will go into a (main) pot. All raises from the "pre-flop" round and all bets from additional rounds will be placed into a (side) pot. The "All-In" player will not be able to bet for the remainder of the hand and should he win the hand he will win only the amount from the (main) pot with the (side) pot going to the next best winning hand. If he does not win the hand he is eliminated from the tournament and the winning hand receives both pots
- When a player does not have enough chips to cover a call he must fold or declare "All-In" and bet all remaining chips. Players who follow the "All-In" player will call the entire bet with a portion equaling the "All-In" player going into the (main) pot and the remaining chips going into a (side) pot. All additional betting for the remainder of the hand will go into the (side) pot. The "All-In" player is only entitled to the (main) pot should he win the hand with the (side) pot going to the next best hand.
- If more than one player goes "All-In" during a hand additional (side) pots will be created using the same rules as above. A player may only win a pot equaling his "All-In" bet and the called bets from following players.

## Time Limits

- Each player is expected to play their hand and make any bets or fold within 30 seconds
- Calling for the clock procedures: Once a reasonable amount of time has passed and a clock is called for, a player will be given one minute to make a decision. If action has not been taken by the time the minute is over, there will be a 10-second countdown. If a player has not acted on his hand by the time the countdown is over, the hand will be dead.

## Dead Button Rule

If the big blind busts out and is not replaced by a player from another table, the button moves to the player who posted the small blind and the player to the left of the former big blind assumes the big blind. There is no small blind for that hand. On the following deal, the button moves to the now empty seat (the seat vacated by the eliminated big blind player) and the two players to the left post the normal blinds.

When the small blind busts out and is not replaced by a player from another table, the button does not move. The player who was the big blind will now post the small blind and the player to his left will post the big blind.

## Misdeals

- The following circumstances will result in a misdeal.
  - Dealer exposes any of the "hole" cards to any player
  - Dealer starts with the wrong position or deals out of sequence (empty chair)
  - Dealer gives any player less or more than the two "hole" cards
  - All misdeals shall be reshuffled and cut
  - Once two players (after the blinds) have acted upon their hands the entire hand shall be played to conclusion regardless of misdeal
  - If too many cards are exposed during the flop or a card was not burned, the cards shall be reshuffled and a new card burned with three new "flop" cards being dealt
  - If too many cards are turned or a card not burned during the "turn" or "river" the existing "community" cards shall remain with the remaining cards reshuffled and a new card burned and a new single card turned
  - If a card is found face up in the deck it shall be placed on the bottom of the deck and the next card shall be played
  - If a card is found missing from the deck prior to any betting it shall be replaced, shuffled and cut. If two players have taken action the hand shall be played to conclusion
  - A card dropped or exposed by a player shall continue to be played

## House Rules

- Each player must play and call his own hand. No assistance may be given by other players or spectators
- Should a player need to briefly leave the game, all play will continue. The dealer post any blinds for the absent player.
- All cards must remain in full view and are not allowed beyond the edge of the table
- All players are entitled to a clear view of opponent's chips with higher denominations made easily visible. Hiding chips is not allowed
- Looking through discards or remaining deck cards is not allowed at any time
- The dealer of each hand will be responsible for verifying all bets, raking bets into pot and awarding the pot to the winning player(s)
- Floor people are to consider the best interest of the game and fairness as the top priority in the decision-making process. Unusual circumstances can, on occasion, dictate that the technical interpretation of the rules be ignored in the interest of fairness. The floorperson's decision is final.
- **Chip race rule:** When it is time to color-up chips, they will be raced off with a maximum of one chip going to any player. The chip race will always start in the No.1 seat. *A player cannot be raced out of a tournament. In the event that a player has only one chip left, the regular race procedure will take place. If that player loses the race, he will be given one chip of the smallest denomination still in play*
- **Odd chips:** The odd chip(s) will go to the high hand. When there are two or more high hands or two or more low hands, the odd chip(s) will go to the left of the button.



- **Side pots:** Each side pot will be split as a separate pot. They will not be mixed together before they are split.
- **Penalties:** A penalty MAY be invoked if a player exposes any card with action pending, if a card(s) goes off the table, if soft-play occurs, or similar incidents take place. Penalties WILL be invoked in cases of abuse, disruptive behavior, or similar incidents. A floor person or the tournament director will invoke penalties.
- All cards will be turned face up once a player is all in and all action is complete.
- If a player puts in a raise of 50 percent or more of the previous bet, he will be required to make a full raise. The raise will be exactly the minimum raise allowed.
- A player who wants to use a cellular phone must step away from the table.
- Deck changes will be on the dealer push or limit changes or as prescribed by the house. Players may not ask for deck changes.
- When time has elapsed in a round and a new round is announced, the new limits apply to the next hand. A hand has begun with the first riffle.
- Players must keep their highest denomination chips visible at all times.
- Verbal declarations as to the content of a player's hand are not binding; however at management's discretion, any player deliberately miscalc his hand may be penalized.
- All chips must be visibly displayed at all times. Players may not have tournament chips in their pockets at any time. A player who has chips in his pocket will forfeit the chips. The forfeited chips will be taken out of play from the tournament.
- Verbal declarations in turn are binding. Action out of turn may be binding.
- Floor people are to consider the best interest of the game and fairness as the top priority in the decision-making process. Unusual circumstances can, on occasion, dictate that the technical interpretation of the rules be ignored in the interest of fairness. The floorperson's decision is final.
- Penalties available for use by the TD are verbal warnings, 10, 20, 30, and 40 minutes away from the table and may be used with discretion. These may be utilized up to and including disqualification. A player who is disqualified shall have his chips removed from play.
- Players are obligated to protect the other players in the tournament at all times. Discussing cards discarded or hand possibilities is not allowed.
- A player who exposes his cards during the play may incur a penalty, but will not have his hand killed.
- Verbally disclosing the contents of your hand or advising a player how to play a hand may result in a penalty
- In no-limit, less than a full raise does not reopen the betting to a player who already has acted.

## CONDUCT CODE

Management will attempt to maintain a pleasant environment for all our customers and employees, but is not responsible for the conduct of any player. We have established a code of conduct, and may deny the use of our card room to anyone who violates it. The following is not permitted:

- Collusion with another player or any other form of cheating.
- Verbally or physically threatening any patron or employee.
- Using profanity or obscene language.
- Creating a disturbance by arguing, shouting, or making excessive noise.
- Throwing, tearing, bending, or crumpling cards.
- Destroying or defacing property.

## POKER ETIQUETTE

The following actions are improper, and grounds for warning, suspending, or barring a violator:

- Deliberately acting out of turn.
- Deliberately splashing chips into the pot.
- Agreeing to check a hand out when a third player is all-in.
- Reading a hand for another player at the showdown before it has been placed faceup on the table.
- Telling anyone to turn a hand face up at the showdown.
- Revealing the contents of a live hand in a multi handed pot before the betting is complete.
- Needlessly stalling the action of a game.
- Deliberately discarding hands away from the muck. Cards should be released in a low line of flight, at a moderate rate of speed (not at the dealer's hands or chip-rack).
- Stacking chips in a manner that interferes with dealing or viewing cards.
- Making statements or taking action that could unfairly influence the course of play, whether or not the offender is involved in the pot.
- Using a cell phone at the table.

